

**Testimony of Shawn Reilly
Eli's Restaurant Group**

In opposition to H.B. No. 5291, An Act Increasing The Minimum Wage, Removing The Minimum Wage Tip Credit, And Increasing Penalties For Failure To Pay The Minimum Wage.

February 28, 2012

Dear Senator Prague, Representative Zalaski and members of the Labor & Public Employees Committee:

I am the Director of Operations for Eli's Restaurant Group which runs Eli's on Whitney and Eli's Brick Oven Pizza in Hamden, CT and Eli's on the Hill in Branford, CT. Please accept my testimony in opposition to HB 5291, *An Act Increasing The Minimum Wage, Removing The Minimum Wage Tip Credit, And Increasing Penalties For Failure To Pay The Minimum Wage.*

Our industry has been hit with sky rocketing food cost increases over the past year, shrinking an already very small profit margin. In the past two years, the state of Connecticut has raised the sales tax, increased the tax on alcoholic beverages, increased the liquor license fees and saddled us with hourly sick pay.

Was it something we said? Did our legislators not get the "the economy is in the toilet and unemployment is 9% memo" that was sent out?

Increasing the minimum wage really does nothing for the people earning minimum wage. It's not going to do anything to change their lives for the better. These people need to have BETTER JOBS and better opportunities. When you continue to strap businesses with more fees and costs, it keeps us from growing and providing some of those opportunities. Raising minimum wage is just going to increase our costs and cause us to increase our prices just to stay in business, forget about trying to grow. And as far as removing the tip credit that's pure insanity, unless of course you are ready to pay \$19.00 for a Caesar salad and a diet soda.

Thank you for your time.

Shawn Reilly